

Scope of Accreditation Examples

What considerations are to take place when determining whether to pursue Institutional or Academic Unit of Accreditation?

Institutional accreditation is the norm when a school is pursuing accreditation, while unit of accreditation is the exception, requiring the submission of a separate document by the applicant. This document is to be reviewed prior to the submission of the school's eligibility application.

AACSB accreditation is granted by default to the institution. In this case, all of the institution's business and management programs are included in the scope of the AACSB accreditation review. For example, if a university offers business and management programs in a variety of units (i.e. School of Business, Graduate School, Continuing Studies, etc.), all of the business programs are part of the accreditation review by default.

Can a school request exclusions under institutional accreditation? Yes, a school may exclude programs if they meet the established guidelines noted in the standards. Examples are noted below. This list is not exhaustive and is meant to serve as guidance for commonly asked questions.

Example A

The College of Business at Orligado University cooperates with the continuing education division in the delivery of a master's level degree program in organizational management. While the continuing education unit awards the degree, the College of Business supplies faculty for half of the courses. On the basis of its participation, this degree program would be included in the Orligado University accreditation review.

The review will include business degree programs delivered jointly or in consortia, where the name of the institution is part of the degree designation. An institution holding AACSB accreditation may contribute to a degree program offered by an institution in another country.

If a degree program conveys any connotation of being a degree program of the institution holding AACSB accreditation, the entire academic program will be subjected to AACSB accreditation review. If the degree program does not convey any connotation of being a degree program of the institution holding AACSB accreditation, it may be excluded from the accreditation review. A consortium might be treated as a separate entity for review if it operates relatively independently of the participating programs. To be accredited separately, the consortium must apply as, and qualify as, an independent entity. Partner institutions and coalition participants do not all need to be accredited.

Example B – Business Degree in Separate College within University

In addition to the programs of the School of Management at DeKuji University, the Department of Political Science delivers a Master of Management degree. It is completely separate from the School of Management. An examination of the content of the program shows that more than 50 percent of the course work is in traditional business subjects. As DeKuji University prepares for its accreditation review, the DeKuji administration does not request that the Master of Management degree be excluded from the scope of the review and anticipated accreditation. It will be included in the review.

Example C – Joint Degrees – Included

The Koszonom School of Economics in Hungary and the Tack Technology Institute in Sweden collaborate on a joint-MBA degree. Students fulfill half of their requirements at Koszonom and half at Tack. Diplomas, transcripts, and degree designations show the name of both institutions. This degree program would be included in the reviews of both schools on the basis of participation, branding, and operational control.

Example D – Joint Degrees - Excluded

The School of Administrative Sciences at Gracias University in Argentina offers an international business master's degree. To complete the degree, students must spend one term in courses at Danken University in Germany and another term at Arigato University in Japan. Danken and Arigato provide instruction for their segments of the program, but that is their only participation. The program is not publicized as an offering of their universities, and their names are not associated with the degree. The program is included in the review of Gracias University, and it is excluded from the reviews of Danken University and Arigato University.

Example E - Can programs with a business title be excluded?

Some examples of programs with a business title are: Bachelors in Construction Management, Masters of Environmental Management, Masters in Public Administration etc. Normally, bachelor degree programs in which 25 percent or more of the teaching relates to traditional business subjects or graduate programs in which 50 percent or more of the teaching relates to traditional business subjects are considered business degree programs and are to be included in the review. Programs with less business content than the established 25 percent and 50 percent notwithstanding, their title may be excluded once the appropriate exclusion request has been submitted, reviewed and approved.

Traditional business subjects include accounting, business law, decision sciences, economics, entrepreneurship, finance (including insurance, real estate, and banking), human resources, international business, management, management information systems, management science, marketing, operations management, organizational behavior, organizational development, strategic management, supply chain management (including transportation and logistics), and technology management. This list is not exhaustive and should be interpreted in the context of the school and mission.

Example F – Separate Campuses

Waywest State University has two ancillary campuses located 10 and 15 miles from the main campus. Each of the three campuses has a College of Business. The administration of the campuses is organized so that a separate College of Business dean on each campus reports to a chief academic officer at that campus. Publicity for programs of the business colleges is separate. Documents such as transcripts and diplomas are separate and designate the campus where academic credits and degrees have been awarded. The College of Business on the main campus can request to be reviewed as the unit of accreditation and exclude the degree programs from the ancillary campuses from its review. If approved, the ancillary campuses could apply separately for AACSB membership and accreditation review.

Example G – Two Business Schools

Hvala School of Management (HSM) is one of the four schools that compose Hvala University, with the other schools being the School of Sociology and Public Policy, the School for Human and Social Sciences, and the School of Technology. There is a separate business entity within Hvala University known as Hvala Business School, offering an MBA and an EMBA. HSM offers undergraduate business degrees, specialized masters, and a doctorate in business administration. The two entities offering business degrees (HSM and HBS) have options when pursuing accreditation. Options are:

1. Pursue institutional accreditation as Hvala University, meaning both HSM and HBS would be included in the scope of review.
2. Pursue unit of accreditation. This option may be selected if the business schools wish to pursue accreditation separately, or if only one of the business schools wishes to pursue accreditation.
 - a. A school seeking unit of accreditation must submit a unit of accreditation request for review by the appropriate accreditation committee (IAC/CIRC/AAC) for review and approval. Only upon committee approval may the school submit an eligibility application for accreditation.

There are four areas outlined below that a school must address in an application that will be brought forth to the committee for their review consideration. For schools that want to limit accreditation to a single unit within a larger entity, this request must be submitted to the Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC) prior to the submission of the school's Eligibility Application. For schools that do not make such a request, the assumption is that all business and management degree programs offered at the institution will be within the AACSB accreditation purview (institutional accreditation).

Schools wishing to seek academic unit accreditation must demonstrate a sufficient level of independence in the following four areas:

- 1) **Branding**—Independent branding of the business academic unit relates to the following: (1) market positioning; (2) promotion (e.g., websites, electronic and print advertising, collateral materials, etc.) of the business and management

degree programs and other programmatic activities offered within the business academic unit; (3) business school name, faculty, and degree titles; and (4) other brand differentiation between the business academic unit and other academic units within the institution.

- 2) **External Market Perception**—This criterion is focused on the extent to which the external markets (students, employers, other stakeholder groups, and the public) perceive that the business academic unit is differentiated from other academic units within the institution. This differentiation may include elements such as student admissions, graduate recruiting and placement histories, and starting salaries.
- 3) **Financial Relationships with the Institution**—Financial relationships relates to the following: (1) approval of operating and capital budgets for the business academic unit; (2) the business academic unit's control over a large portion of the funds available to the unit; (3) subsidies to the institution; and (4) ownership or control of physical and financial assets.
- 4) **Business Academic Unit Autonomy**—Autonomy of the business academic unit is described in terms of its adherence to the policies and procedures of the larger institution or in terms of the source of approval of or constraints on its activities related to the following areas: (1) the strategic plan of the business academic unit; (2) approval of key decisions of the business academic unit; (3) appointment of the head or senior leader of the business academic unit; (4) geographic separation of the business academic unit and the larger institution; and (5) any other significant attribute of the relationship that affects the autonomy of the business academic unit.

Schools applying for business unit accreditation should submit the **Business Unit of Accreditation Application**, <http://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/aacsb/docs/accreditation/misc%20forms%20and%20documentation/application-unit-of-accreditation.ashx?la=en>, along with supporting materials to accrreditation@aacsb.edu. The application will be brought forward to the next scheduled accreditation committee meeting. Check here for a listing of when the various accreditation committees meet:
<http://www.aacsb.edu/volunteers/accreditation/committees>.

For questions, please contact your assigned AACSB accreditation staff liaison. Should you not yet have an assigned accreditation staff liaison please find the accreditation manager assigned to your geographical area by accessing <http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/contact>.